EXHIBIT A

Performance Management Plan Narrative
Westwind Children's Services

Overview

Westwind Children's Services is a nonprofit charter school that opened in 1998 near 19th Avenue and Northern in Phoenix. WCS is a nonprofit 501c3 corporation. The charter currently has two sites: Westwind Prep and Westwind at Anthem, which opened in 2010. The sites have a current combined enrollment of 247 students. Our mission is to provide young men and women with a solid educational foundation in a context of care and concern. Westwind Preparatory Academy combines a challenging curriculum with clear, moral direction. Instruction is marked by the seamless integration of technology and a dedication to the mental, physical and moral development of all students. Students receive a quality education, sensitive to their learning styles and designed to equip them with the skills and core knowledge upon which further learning must be based. Westwind's curriculum is founded firmly on the fundamental tradition that values the refinement of thought and fortification of character that charges individuals with the responsibility to the common good and a global perspective of the world and their places in it. The vision of the school is to reach every student every day with a high quality, research based program of instruction with a high degree of fidelity to the required standards and designed to meet the needs of diverse learners. The school was accredited by North Central Association in 2000 and has remained accredited since that time.

Westwind's curriculum is based on the Arizona Academic Standards. Math and English teachers attended training for the Common Core Standards so the transition can be made to these standards in accordance with the State's timeline for that transition. Also, the current Director of Curriculum and Instruction has been accepted into the "Train the Trainer" program provided by the Arizona Department of Education for the transition to the Common Core Standards (2010 Arizona Academic Standards). The program monitors student progress using data from AIMS, in-house assessments and, most recently, the Acuity System of Assessment from Pearson, which was purchased from the Arizona Charter Schools Association. This data is used to make the appropriate instructional decisions for all students. Westwind's schedule is designed to provide both enrichment and remediation outside of regular instructional time. The goal of this additional time is to encourage growth for all students, regardless of their current level of achievement.

Westwind's schedule provides for extensive professional development, which is approximately 20 sessions per year. Included in the professional development during the last 5 years is:

- training in alignment of curriculum and instruction;
- data interpretation and its impact on instructional decisions;
- classroom management;
- training on resources such as Acuity;

- special education guidelines;
- differentiating instruction;
- Great Books and the use of the Socratic Method;
- reading strategies for adolescents;
- effective parent communication;
- Essential Elements of Instruction;
- Cornell note taking;
- Bloom's Taxonomy;
- student performance reviews.

Until recently, teachers were required to submit lesson plans on a weekly basis, showing what they have taught, what Performance Objectives were covered, what assessments were used, what resources were used and what level of Bloom's Taxonomy addressed in the learning. Currently, teachers are required to submit their lesson plans prior to the instructional week, as well as the assessment they are going to use for the unit that shows what Performance Objectives are being assessed. This is designed to allow for an increased level of accountability for teachers.

Demographics

Westwind Prep has a very diverse population. Over the past two years, there has been a significant increase in the number of students who are considered homeless, as well as those who meet eligibility requirements for the National School Lunch Program's free or reduced lunches. Westwind Prep has also seen a significant increase in the number of ELL and Special Education students whom the school serves. SB1070 did have a negative impact on the school's enrollment of students. Students also face challenges of a community that is highly mobile, with parents who are under a great deal of pressure to provide for their families. While Westwind has had an excellent turnout for its beginning of the year celebrations, more often than not follow through is lacking because parents do not have the time or energy to devote to their students' educational process. The administration and staff of Westwind Prep have and will continue to accept the challenge to meet the needs of all of their students, regardless of their socioeconomic status, academic performance or special needs.

Westwind at Anthem's population is significantly less diverse, both ethnically and socio-economically than the student population at Westwind Prep. Because the school is new, it is still developing a culture of its own. However, the same focus on student growth and achievement exists at Westwind at Anthem as it does at Westwind Prep.

The zip code where Westwind Prep is located has seen a 12% decline in population since 2000. The poverty rate for this area is 32% with a 19% vacancy rate in housing. The average household income for this area is less than $30,000 annually. While there has been a reduction in the crime rate in the past ten years, the crime risk for the area is more than double that of the national average, and larceny/theft is a significant problem in the

area and the highest percentage of crimes reported. Two thirds of the adults living in our zip code have an educational level that is less than a bachelor's degree.

Westwind at Anthem opened in 2010 in response to parents at a nearby charter school who expressed an interest in having a choice for their students' education beyond Boulder Creek, the local district school, which was the only high school available to residents of Anthem at the time. While this area has experienced a 3,000% increase in population since 2000, it has been hit significantly in recent years with the depressed economy. The median household income for this area is over $90,000 annually. The poverty rate is 4.4%. There is an 11.4% home vacancy rate in the 85086 zip code.

Teaching and Administrative Staff

The national turnover rate for teachers in urban areas is 16.8 percent. Westwind's teacher turnover rate has fluctuated over the past five years. However, in the past three years, the teacher turn over rate has been higher than the national average. This could be due, in part, to the small group number from which the average would be taken. The charter has had its most secure teaching staff in English and Social Studies, with a high turn over in Math. Currently, there are 12.5 members of the teaching staff at Westwind Prep, and 4.5 members of the teaching staff at Westwind at Anthem.

The experience levels of the teaching staff are varied. Eight members of the Westwind Prep faculty have their Masters Degrees in Education. One member of the Westwind at Anthem teaching staff has his Doctorate Degree, and two members of the teaching staff at Westwind at Anthem have their Masters Degrees.

The school provides support through the administrative staff. Additionally, a new Director of Curriculum and Instruction with experience in school improvement was hired this fall to assist teaching staff. Teachers are provided training in research based instructional strategies, specific curriculum training, classroom management and effective use of data and assessments to make instructional decisions.

The administrative staff at both Westwind Prep and Westwind at Anthem have a significant level of experience in education. This past fall, the principal at Westwind Prep was reassigned as a result of the declining academic growth and performance of students. The new director of curriculum and instruction is now the instructional leader for this site. He also operates in a consultative role with the principal at Westwind at Anthem regarding curriculum and instruction. The current team has extensive experience in curriculum design, professional development design and delivery, assessment development, data analysis and classroom management.

Westwind provides training prior to the beginning of each school year, as well as through the school year. The ongoing professional development is designed to be focused and job

embedded. All instructional staff are trained in the use of data to make curricular and instructional decisions. In addition to being trained in the interpretation of data from state mandated assessments, teaching staff has been trained on analyzing data from other sources, such as Acuity. Teachers have also been trained on evaluating instructional resources based on Lexile scores and their correlation to AIMS results. Prior to the use of Acuity, the Westwind teaching staff was trained in the use of data from the Northwest Evaluation Assessment for benchmarking purposes. However, the use of this assessment ended in 2008 due to costs and inefficiency.

All teachers at Westwind are required to create a Teacher Portfolio on an annual basis. The portfolio includes a section for each class in the teacher's schedule. Each of those sections includes the following:

- the standards for the course being taught;
- the syllabus;
- the pre & post test for the course;
- all assessments for the class.

The portfolio must also contain the content specific daily reading prompts that were used throughout the course, as well as a copy of the teacher's web page that correlates to the syllabus and the class expectations. Each assessment in the portfolio must be aligned to the Arizona State Standards or the Common Core Standards. Behind the assessment an analysis of student performance on a question by question basis must be presented on a spreadsheet. A brief description of any interventions then must follow the spread sheet. At the end of each semester, the portfolio will contain the course outline, the course syllabus, grade books from each class in hard copy, as well as a grade book print out per student. Portfolios are turned in after each nine week period, and reviewed by the teacher and the principal during the teacher's evaluation and observation meeting.

From 2006 – 2008, all teaching staff members were required to read the following books: *A Framework for Understanding Poverty, I Read It, But I Don't Get It,* and *Good to Great/ Good to Great in the Social Sector.* In 2010, teachers were required to read *Teach Like a Champion.* The goal of these reading assignments was to help teachers differentiate instruction, gain a better understanding of the issues that could affect student learning ; and understand the key components to effective organizations in both business and the social sector.

Efforts to Improve Student Achievement

Class Schedule

Both Westwind Prep and Westwind at Anthem have a block schedule. Westwind Prep's schedule is a 4X4 block. Classes are two hours in length and cover the content of one credit in one semester, much like a college schedule. Westwind at Anthem's block is an A/B block, with A classes on Mondays/Wednesdays and B classes on Tuesdays/Thursdays. Both schools have a four day instructional week, with Friday mornings for enrichment and remediation and Friday afternoons for staff meetings and professional development.

Westwind Prep's block schedule transitioned from an A/B schedule to a two-hour block schedule in 2006.

2006-2007

Overview

During the 2006-2007 school year, Westwind Prep Academy had an average reported enrollment of 260 students. Of that number 69% qualified for free or reduced lunch and 9% qualified for special services. The teaching staff and administrative staff for the 2006-2007 school year included eight individuals who had been on staff for four or more years. Of those, four had been with Westwind more than six years. There were fifteen teachers for the 2006-2007 school year, of which five had earned masters degrees.

Curriculum Development

During the 2006-2007 school year the data that the school had available indicated that the school was performing at an adequate level, based on the state standards and the state assessment.

Math

The math curriculum at that time was the Glencoe curriculum that had been used in previous years. This curriculum was under evaluation by the teaching staff to determine the level of alignment with the State Academic Standards. Instructional practices were aligned to the State Standards but there was some consideration to change the resources available to teachers for teaching the State Standards in the math program.

Prior to the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year the administration and the teaching staff, including the math instructors were given specific training on ways to increase the rigor, relevance, and relationships within the classroom. The intent of this training, which was based on "Breaking Ranks II" published by the Association of Secondary School Principals, was to insure that the level of instruction in math was adequate and would allow students to continue to move forward towards reaching the increasing benchmarks established by No Child Left Behind. The AIMS data from the previous year was analyzed by the administration and presented to the teachers.

It became apparent to the instructional staff that additional time on task would be beneficial to the students. The instructional staff this year was a very capable group both in their knowledge of the content and in their ability to differentiate instruction. This group of teachers prepared additional math activities for the students that included;

competitions, before and after school tutoring, and additional instructional time on Fridays for students in advanced classes or students who were struggling.

This group of teachers formed a committee to review available textbooks for alignment to State Standards. This committee met outside of the normal instructional day. It was because of the work of this committee of instructors that the school made the determination to replace the existing text series with a different publisher more fully aligned to both the identified needs of the students and the State Standards.

In addition, the teachers expressed a concern about students in the block schedule who might not have a math class in the spring semester prior to testing and would benefit from additional math training to maintain the level of rigor the school was presenting to the students. As a result, academic electives in math were created to supplement the curriculum. These electives were required for students during those semesters when a student was not scheduled to have a math class. The curriculum of these elective classes was aligned to the State Standards and designed to reinforce learning using a variety of instructional strategies and materials.

The general instructional staff was also trained in using math across the curriculum by the math instructors to further enhance the math curriculum

Language Arts

As with math, the school recognized the need to increase the rigor and relevance for the language arts curriculum in both the level of reading materials and in the writing done by students in order to continue to meet the requirements of No Child Left Behind. During this year the curriculum remained the same and was aligned to the State Standards. The instructors did receive the training provided at the beginning of the year based on "Breaking Ranks II" to help them increase the rigor and relevance of the instruction throughout the year. The training prior to the beginning of the school year also included training in the instruction and use of the Cornell note taking system. This system was then implemented school-wide to support the language arts program and provide students with an additional graphic organizer to improve student achievement.

Beginning with this school year all teachers were required to support the language arts program through a daily reading prompt for their content areas. This also included having students submit a written response that was then graded by the teacher and collected and reviewed by the site administrator on a weekly basis to maintain accountability and to monitor student progress. The primary focus of the reading prompts and brief writing assignments was to help students master reading and writing of informational and expository texts. This was done in all content areas in conjunction with the English teachers.

Monitoring and Integration of Arizona Academic Standards

Westwind Academy had created a curriculum that was aligned and focused on the current Academic Standards. In order to effectively monitor the implementation of these standards the school required teachers to submit weekly lesson plans at the end of the week that reflected the instruction that had occurred during that week. These plans allowed the site level administrator to monitor the instruction to insure that the material being taught was aligned to the curriculum and the Arizona Academic Standards.

Further, the administration conducted informal observations regularly to observe instruction and to monitor the implementation of the State Standards. The site administrator also conducted longer, formal observations for the same purpose. The determination the level of rigor and level of student engagement was also part of these observations.

At the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year, the AIMS data from the previous school year was analyzed and evaluated by a data team to determine if the curriculum was properly aligned to the State Standards and provide adequate support to insure student progress. The results of this information were shared with the instructional staff.

Monitoring of alignment to the State Standards was continuous throughout the school year.

Monitoring and Documenting Student Proficiency

At the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year, the AIMS results from the previous year were analyzed and evaluated by a data team that included the site administrator. The results of this analysis were shared with the instructional staff in order to allow them to make instructional decisions.

The school also implemented the use of the Northwest Evaluation Assessment (NWEA) with all incoming students in order to determine appropriate placement for those students. All students were given the NWEA at the end of the first semester to determine effectiveness of the curriculum and instruction and to provide information for instructional decisions during the second semester.

Teacher and textbook generated assessments were the primary source of determining student progress and achievement during the year in addition to the AIMS results from the previous year. No additional benchmark testing was implemented.

All teachers were required to give a reading prompt and writing assignment every day. These were graded by the teacher. These assignments were then collected on a weekly basis by the site administrator and reviewed to monitor student progress. Concerns or areas of weakness could then be addressed in a timely manner. This data was collected and shared with individual teachers but was not shared on a school-wide basis.

All 10th graders were required to take the PSAT. The school paid for this assessment in order to have additional data from a national baseline.

Professional Development to Support Student Achievement

The professional development plan for the 2006-2007 school year focused on supporting teachers as they increased the rigor of the instruction within their classrooms. Prior to the beginning of the school year all teachers received training in increased rigor and relevance as presented by the Association of Secondary School Principals in "Breaking Ranks II."

To support increased math achievement, all teachers were given professional development in the use of math across the curriculum. This training was presented by the math teachers who could then support and help teachers effectively implement math in all content areas.

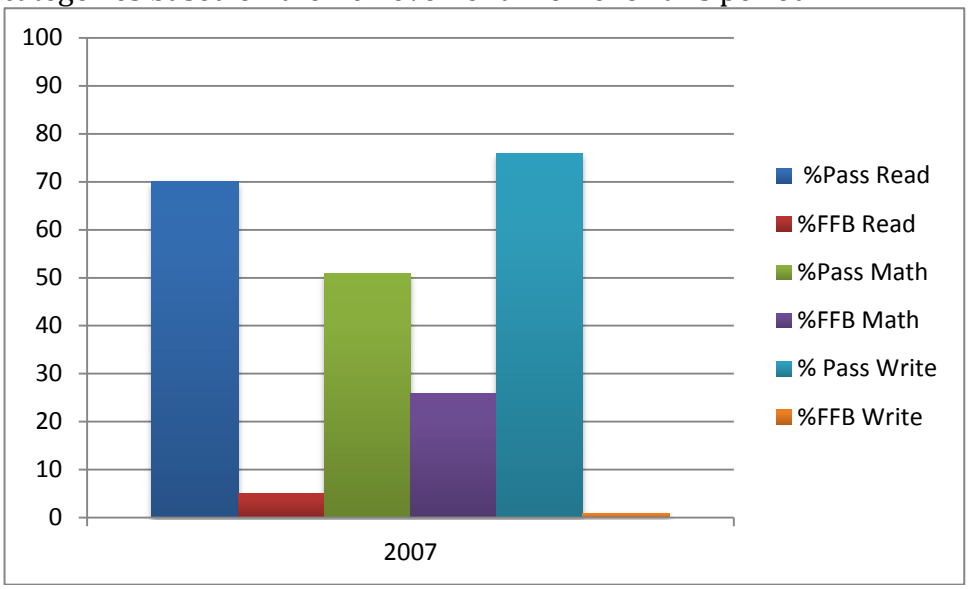
Teachers also received specific professional development in the use of the reading prompts and writing responses that were required for all teachers on a daily basis. This training was designed to help students improve both their content reading skills, especially as it related to informational and expository text and to improve general writing skills when applied to a wide range of topics.

The teachers met regularly on Friday afternoons with the site administration. The focus of these meetings was to review test data, to compare the student achievement on those tests to the school curriculum and State Standards, as well as to insure that students were making adequate progress and to identify those students or areas of the curriculum that needed additional support.

Summary

Following the AIMS assessment in the spring of 2007, Westwind Prep was labeled a Performing School under AZLEARNS, with 70% of its tenth graders passing reading and 51% passing math. The school made AYP.

Below is a graph that represents the AIMS data from the year in all three measured categories based on the Achievement Profile for this period



2007-2008

Overview

During the 2007-2008 school year Westwind Prep Academy reported an average daily membership of 258 students. Of that number 59% qualified for free or reduced lunch and 8% qualified for special services. Two of the three members of the teaching staff in each of the content areas of math and reading remained consistent from the year prior. All three math teachers that year had previous experience in teaching math; and two of the three English teachers that year were experienced teachers. The principal was the same principal who had been in place the past two years.

Math

For this school year the school adopted a new core text for math. This change was based on the evaluations conducted by the math department the previous year. The evaluation team determined that the new text was more closely aligned to the Arizona Academic Standards and would provide the teachers with a better, more effective resource with which to address the State Standards.

During the summer the math curriculum had been modified slightly to better address the needs of the students. This revised curriculum continued to be aligned to State Academic Standards.

In addition to changing the math core text, the math teachers had determined that the students would benefit from the addition of Advanced Placement coursework, which would

increase the rigor of the current curriculum while still addressing the State Standards. The administration determined that the current math department had the expertise to do this and the class was added to the curriculum.

The math department continued to implement the differentiation and support program both in and out of the classroom that had been put in place the previous year. This program was expanded to include a before school Advanced Placement class. The Friday schedule was adjusted to better address the needs of students who were struggling with concepts. This allowed for more careful tracking to ensure that the students who needed the additional time and support were receiving it.

Language Arts

The Language Arts program remained very similar to the program that had been put into place the previous year. All content area teachers were required to give students a reading prompt and short writing assignment directly connected to their content areas each day. These were evaluated by the teacher and maintained. The administration then collected and reviewed them on a weekly basis. The administration felt that the program had been very successful previously and that with a second year it would have an even greater impact. The resulting AIMS scores supported this conclusion.

Additionally, all teachers were provided specific training in parental engagement and were required to keep parents informed of student progress and document their contacts with families in an effort to engage the families in the academic achievements of their students.

Teachers were required to continue to implement the Cornell note taking system to help students organize thoughts, ideas and concepts in a useful manner and to help as a graphic organizer to improve student achievement.

Monitoring of Integration of Arizona Academic Standards

The administration continued the process from the previous year of requiring lesson plans that reflected the State Standards as well as the teacher's adherence to the established curriculum, which was also aligned to the state standards. The administrative team reviewed these plans regularly.

The site administration continued to conduct informal observations throughout the school year to insure that teachers were presenting material aligned to the State Standards. The administrative team also conducted formal evaluations of all instructional staff. Part of that evaluation was the alignment of instruction to the State Standards.

Additional time prior to the start of the school year was devoted to the analysis of AIMS data to make sure that the instruction had been and remained aligned to State Standards. In addition, this careful analysis provided teachers with information to make instructional decisions for the upcoming school year.

Monitoring and Documenting of Student Progress

The school created a data review team that included site level administration to review the AIMS data from the previous year. This information was then shared with teachers. Additional time was devoted to the analysis of this data with the staff prior to the start of the school year in order for all the staff to identify student needs, areas of concern and make the best instructional decisions.

The school continued to use the Northwest Evaluation Assessment instrument for students new to the school in order to identify the correct placement for the students. All students were given NWEA assessment in January. This was done to gather data on gaps that needed to be addressed for the second semester. That information was then shared with teachers as an evaluation tool for monitoring the effectiveness of both the curriculum and instruction and to drive instructional decisions for the second semester.

During the course of the school year, the school relied on teacher generated and textbook generated assessments to track student progress. In addition, daily reading and writing assignments in all content areas were used by the teachers and administration to identify students with needs in these areas. These daily assessments were one of the forms of formative assessments teachers regularly provided to students. Other common forms of formative assessments, such as quizzes and short writing assignments were given regularly and evaluated prior to the more structured summative assessments that were given at the end of units of study in all content areas. These assessments, both formative and summative, were subject to administrative review throughout the school year.

In addition to the on site monitoring of student progress, the school required that all 10th graders take the PSAT. The school paid for this assessment in order to monitor student progress against a national benchmark.

Professional Development to Support Student Achievement

Prior to the start of the school year, teachers received training in data analysis. The focus was on effectively using the information developed from a careful review of the information from the AIMS results gathered from the Spring 2008 test. The purpose of this focus was to aid teachers in using the data to drive instructional decisions.

This training was then monitored by the administrative team to ensure implementation.

Once the school year was under way, professional development focused on improving student engagement and time on task through better instructional practices. This information was also monitored by the administrative team to insure that the best practices presented were being used effectively in the classroom. The administration monitored the implementation of these practices through the use of the T4S protocols and observation forms.

The final component of the professional development plan for the year was to help teachers communicate more effectively with families engagement in student learning. Teachers were given strategies to communicate with families to help improve student achievement. Teachers were required to document parent contact, which allowed the administration to monitor teacher/parent contacts.

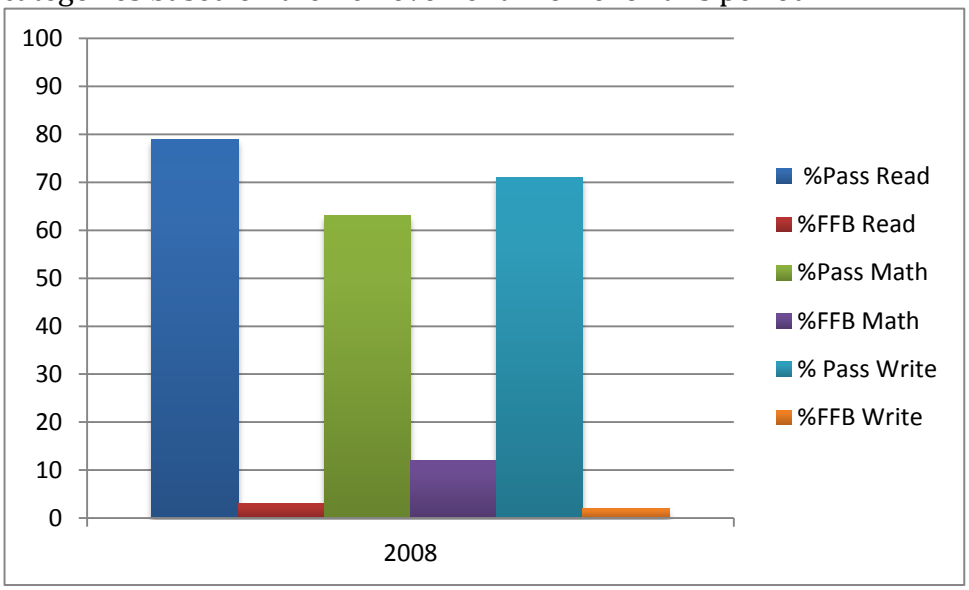
In addition to the professional development listed above, the school restructured the schedule for Friday School, implementing a more carefully structured schedule. This was done to assure students adequate time to receive the support or enrichment that was necessary to improve student achievement.

The administrative team was trained by WestEd in the use of the T4S observation form. The purpose of this professional development was to aid the administration in identifying those instructional areas of weakness that might exist and help teachers be more effective in improving student achievement.

Summary

In 2008, Westwind Prep was labeled Highly Performing by the Arizona Department of Education. That year, 79% of sophomores passed AIMS reading, and 63% of sophomores passed AIMS math as presented in the Achievement Profile for that year. The school made AYP for this fiscal year.

Below is a graph that represents the AIMS data from the year in all three measured categories based on the Achievement Profile for this period.



2008-2009

Overview

During the 2008-2009 school year Westwind Prep Academy had an average daily enrollment of 278 students. Of that number 75% were identified as qualifying for free or reduced lunch. This was a significant increase from the previous year and reflected a change in the demographics of the population being served. In addition, 11% of the population qualified for special services.

During the summer of 2008, the principal of the school moved, forcing a change in the administration. The entire administrative team was new at the beginning of the school year. In addition, each of the members of the highly effective math team moved out of state. Besides the change of several key components to the school, one of the teachers hired to teach math had to be replaced in November due to unprofessional conduct.

Math

During the 2007-2008 school year, the school had adopted an new core math text. During that same year the math team then modified the curriculum to reflect the changes in math text. With the need to replace the entire math team during the 2008-2009 school year, the administration determined that it would not be prudent to make any significant changes to the math curriculum at this time. In addition, an analysis of the AIMS results for the Spring 2008 assessment showed a passing rate that had improved from the previous year. These factors contributed to the administrative decision to make no significant changes in the math curriculum for the 2008-2009 school year.

It became necessary to replace one of the math teachers near the end of the first semester. In addition, with the new math teachers it was determined that the Advanced Placement class would not be offered for this school year. It was felt that the capacity of the math department at this time was not adequate to effectively meet the requirements of this class.

During this school year, the school began offering dual enrollment classes in conjunction with the Maricopa Community College System. These classes would be offered through the end of the 2010-2011 school year.

The general level of accountability within this department from the administrative team was less than had been required by the previous administration.

Language Arts

The AIMS results from the Spring test in 2008 indicated an increase in the number of students passing the AIMS. The new administrative team determined that the current curriculum then in place was adequate and chose not to make any significant changes.

In addition, all of the instructors from the previous year were retained for this school year. One additional teacher was added to the department.

The daily reading and writing prompts were no longer required or monitored by the site administrator, although they did remain a part of the curriculum.

During this school year the school began offering dual enrollment classes in conjunction with the Maricopa Community College System. These classes would be offered through the end of the 2010-2011 school year.

Integration of Arizona Academic Standards

To insure that teachers continued to integrate and teach the Arizona Academic Standards, teachers were required to submit lesson plans weekly to identify the performance objectives addressed. These were reviewed by the administration. In addition, the administration did four observations of each teacher throughout the year, including one that was video taped and one that included a peer review component. Part of the observation protocol was the identification and instruction of the State Standards. Teachers were also required to post the performance objective for the current lesson on the board in their rooms. These were observed by the administration in walk through visits as well as the formal observations.

As soon as it was available, the AIMS results were analyzed by a data team that included the site administration. This information was used to insure that teachers continued to teach the State Standards. This information was also shared with teachers to help identify gaps that might exist in either the curriculum or in the instructional practices of the teacher.

Monitoring and Documenting Student Proficiency

As soon as the AIMS results from the Spring 2008 test were available, the results were analyzed and students who needed additional support were identified. This information was then shared with teachers.

For budgetary reasons the NWEA assessment that had been given in the past were not given this year. The PSAT was not given because of a scheduling conflict. Teacher generated assessments and text book assessments were given on a regular basis and the results were reviewed by teachers and the data used to make instructional decisions

Professional Development to Support Student Achievement

The success of the AIMS results in the Spring of 2008 caused the new site administrator to focus professional development into longer term goals for the instructional staff. Prior to the beginning of school, staff was provided with data from the previous year.

During the course of the year, the teachers received training in the use of the "Teacher 2 Teacher" federal website. To monitor the effective use of this website the administration required that teachers complete the tasks presented on the website and then present the certificate of completion from the website on a regular basis. The teachers were to focus

on the reading and writing portion of the instruction on this website. The website presents information in a focused manner on specific topics of instruction for teachers and was accepted for Continuing Education Credit by the Arizona Department of Education.

To begin fostering the environment for a Professional Learning Community campus, the site administrator also created a weekly blog that teachers needed to read and to which they needed to respond in writing. These discussions were also then addressed each Friday as part of the normal schedule. The questions and statements posed in the blogs were designed to foster thoughtful discussions on ways to improve the student achievement on campus through more effective collaboration and sharing as well as personal reflection on the part of the teachers.

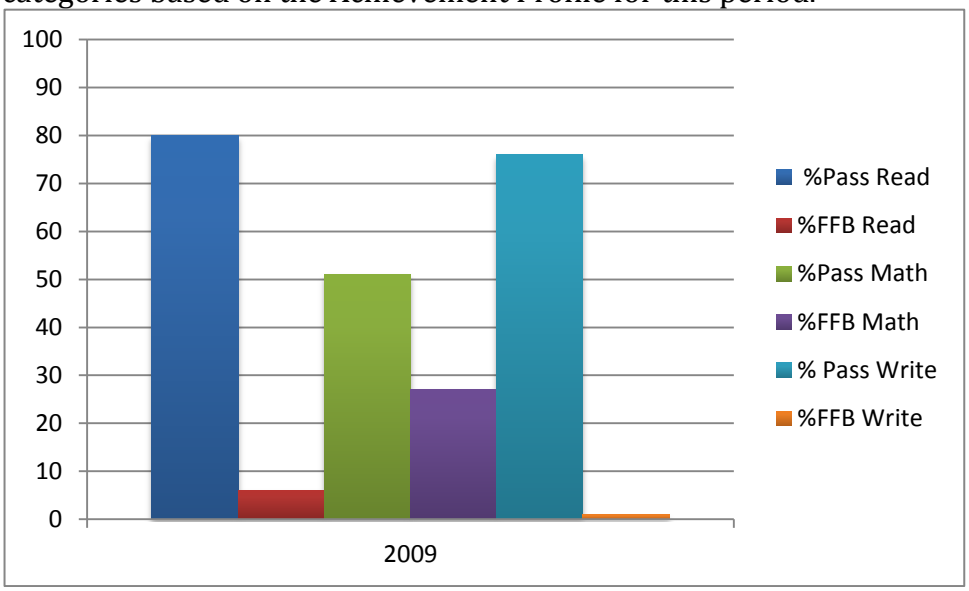
The school provided specific training in the use of Lexile scores and measurement. The training, which was presented early in the year, addressed what Lexile scores and measurements were, what a Lexile score meant, and how student achievement could be improved by addressing the Lexile score and increasing the rigor of student reading.

To expand the information for teachers, the school also had all instructional staff attend the Arizona Charter School Conference. The intent was to explore best practices and to gather new instructional ideas from peers to increase student achievement.

Summary

The results from the 2009 AIMS test showed a significant drop in math scores while maintaining reading scores. As soon as this information became available the school did a careful analysis of the data to determine the cause in the decline.

Below is a graph that represents the AIMS data from the year in all three measured categories based on the Achievement Profile for this period.



2009-2010

Overview

As was noted above, the decline in AIMS scores was cause for much concern on the part of the school. The site administrator reviewed the data and determined that there was a need to review and revise both the math curriculum and reading curriculum. Several of the instructional staff were replaced. The school population continued to change with 86% of the students qualifying for free or reduced lunch.

Math

Because of the drop in the AIMS scores in the Spring of 2009, the site administrator brought in teachers to revisit and revise the math curriculum. This revision of the curriculum was completed prior to the beginning of the year and was in place for the teachers during pre-service that year. This revision also reflected the changes to the State Standards, as well as gaps in the curriculum and instruction that were identified by the analysis of the AIMS data from the previous Spring.

Two of the three teachers from the previous opening of school were no longer on staff. The change in instructional staff for this content area was also designed to improve student achievement.

The school continued to offer dual enrollment classes for students in math throughout the year. These classes were provided in conjunction with the Maricopa Community College System.

Reading

The school did an evaluation of the AIMS scores from the Spring of 2009 and determined that, while the decline in literacy scores was not as great as those in math, they were of concern. Two thirds of the English Department staff were teachers returning to the school. The site administrator determined that the language arts curriculum needed to be revised. Part of that revision included the adoption of the Great Books program.

The intent of this change was twofold. First, the level of rigor within the content area would be increased through the adoption of this program. In addition, teachers would need to be trained in the Socratic method of instruction and questioning to maximize this program. Much of the professional development for the school year was devoted to using this program correctly.

The third reason for adopting this program was to increase the level of Bloom's Taxonomy that was used within the classroom for both discussion and assessments.

Significant time and effort was devoted to professional development in the effective use of the Socratic Method. However, the monitoring of this approach as it was being used by teachers was not as effective as it needed to be in order to insure that the program was fully implemented. Materials were purchased to provide teachers with the resources to implement this approach.

The school continued to offer dual enrollment classes for students in language arts throughout the year. These classes were provided in conjunction with the Maricopa Community College System.

Integration of Arizona Academic Standards

Both the math curriculum and language arts curriculum were revised during the summer prior to the 2009 school year. This was done, in part, to insure that both were aligned to the most current Arizona Academic State Standards.

Teachers were required to provide copies of lesson plans weekly that reflected the performance objectives that were being addressed during that instructional period in all content areas. All teachers were observed informally throughout the year. Part of those observations was to insure that teachers were addressing the State Standards at the appropriate level. Instruction on State Standards was also part of the formal observation that the site administrator was to do twice a year.

AIMS data from the previous Spring was reviewed by the site administrator and her team of teachers to determine if there were any gaps in the curriculum or in instruction that needed to be addressed in relation to the State Standards. This information was shared with the teachers at the earliest possible time.

Monitoring and Documenting of Student Proficiency

During the 2009-2010 school year, the primary data collected came from the Spring AIMS results. This information was disaggregated by the administration and selected staff members. It was then shared with teachers at the beginning of the school year.

In addition to the AIMS data, teachers used both formative and summative assessments that they created or that were provided by the textbook publishers.

The school did not have a common benchmark assessment in place during this year.

Professional Development to Support Student Achievement

The primary emphasis of the professional development plan for the year was on the effective use of the Great Books program and implementing the Socratic Method of instruction and questioning.

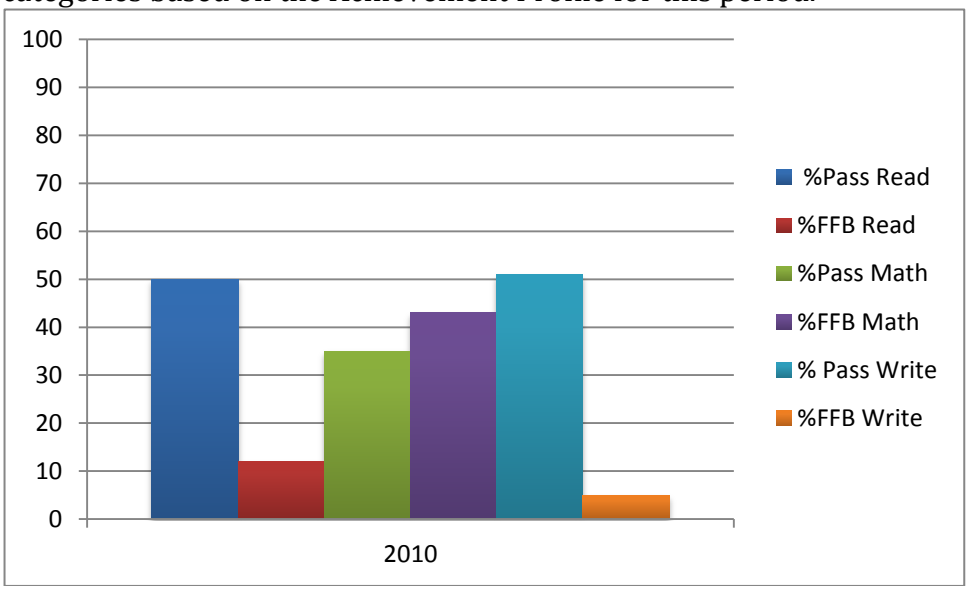
This training occurred on a weekly basis throughout the year. During the trainings teacher led groups were required to demonstrate the effective use of the Socratic Method on topics relevant to the school and to student achievement.

The focus of each of these trainings was to help teachers increase the rigor of their instruction and to require students to interact with their learning at a higher level of Bloom's Taxonomy.

Summary

The results of the 2010 Spring AIMS test demonstrated that the efforts of the previous year had not been successful. As a result there were some changes in staff. It also became apparent that the district level administration would need to review and more closely monitor the activities of the school. Following the review of information available to the district administration, several changes occurred. Also, the district administration began to look at programs that would increase the rigor of both the curriculum and instruction for all content areas. During the summer of 2010, it was determined that the school would apply to become an International Baccalaureate Program.

Below is a graph that represents the AIMS data from the year in all three measured categories based on the Achievement Profile for this period.



2010-2011

Overview

The Spring AIMS results indicated that the school, although labeled as Performing, continued to have lower scores. There was a slight drop in the number of students who qualified for free or reduced lunch, but the total number of students was significant at 70%.

The staff remained relatively stable from the previous year in the areas of language arts and math.

The school also began the application process to become a International Baccalaureate School. The district administration had done an evaluation of various programs and determined that this program offered a number of advantages to students, including increased rigor and an assessment system along with extensive professional development for instructional staff. The process required a full year of preparation before the school would be certified.

Math

The school determined that the continuing difficulty with math scores was not the result of the curriculum alone. During the previous year, one math teacher had been dismissed during the year as a result of ineffective instruction. The teacher who had replaced him had been moved to a lower grade in an attempt to improve the program earlier and a replacement teacher had been hired to start the school year.

The school determined that they needed to increase the rigor of math both in the instruction and the content. The school determined that the International Baccalaureate program could provide both through the professional development provided to teachers and the assessment program available. The school began the application process and training to become an IB school.

Reading

The application to the International Baccalaureate program would have a number of benefits for the language arts program, as well as the math program. The increased rigor of the IB program would parallel the increases that the school had identified as part of the Common Core Standards. The increased writing and depth of reading along with the Socratic method of discussion would be beneficial for all students.

The district administration also had noted that the weekly review of the daily reading and writing prompts across the curriculum had not been done for several years. The district administration required that the site administrator review these on a weekly basis and that this information and data be shared with the instructional staff.

The primary change to the core language arts curriculum was to review and replace some of the content being used. This took the form of additional, more challenging novels to be used in the classroom. This was done to address the needs of the IB curriculum and to increase the rigor of the material being taught to address both the decrease in scores and to prepare for the Common Core Standards.

Integration of the Arizona Academic Standards

The school continued to require teachers to submit lesson plans on a weekly basis. These plans were to identify the performance objectives from the State Standards. These plans were reviewed by the site administrator to insure that the teachers were addressing the State Standards in all instruction.

In addition, each teacher was to have two formal reviews by the site administrator during the course of the year. These reviews included the teacher addressing the State Standards during instruction. The teachers also had several informal reviews during the course of the year. The site administrator was to review the instruction for alignment to the State Standards.

The school conducted a review of the Spring AIMS results to determine if there were gaps in the curriculum based on the scores. This information was shared with the teachers as soon as it was available.

Monitoring and Documenting of Student Progress

The school recognized that the continuing use of AIMS scores as the primary school wide assessment was providing data that was useful but too late to make meaningful instructional decisions. The school continued to use a data team consisting of the site administrator and classroom teachers to analyze the AIMS data as soon as it became available. This data was then provided to the teachers early in the school year.

The school determined that applying to become an International Baccalaureate school would provide an additional level of assessments throughout the year. The school also determined that it would be necessary to provide an additional level of benchmarking of students to provide teachers with the information necessary to make instructional decisions in a timely manner. The school began reviewing assessment programs during the year. At the end of the year, the school determined to use the CTB McGraw Hill assessment program ACUITY for the 2011-2012 school year. The school contracted with the Arizona Charter School Association to provide the training for this program. This program was implemented beginning in August of 2011. Training will be on-going to insure that teachers understand all the elements of the assessment program and can effectively use the data generated by the assessments to make appropriate instructional decisions.

During the course of the year teachers were still required to create assessments based on the State Standards and the content presented in class. These assessments were collected by the site administrator and reviewed.

Professional Development to Support Student Achievement

Prior to the start of the school year, teachers were given the AIMS data. The data was discussed and explained when necessary for teachers so that they began the year with a good understanding of what needed to be addressed in both math and language arts.

The teachers also reviewed the methods for presenting the daily reading and writing prompts that would be carefully monitored through the course of the year. The teachers also began the training for the International Baccalaureate program. The school recognized that the increased rigor would challenge some of the teachers and move some out of their comfort zones, and this would require extensive professional development support throughout the year. Some of this training would be provided through the IB program and some would be provided by the administrative staff of the school

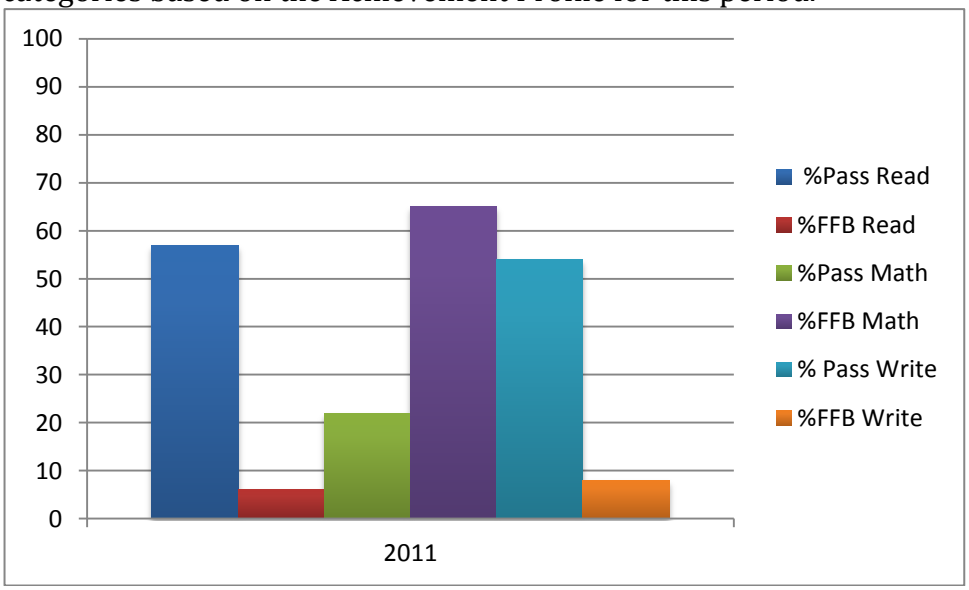
During the course of the year, teachers were given professional development on Lexile scores and their use in the classroom, addressing ELL learners in the classroom as well as the training necessary for the IB program.

Teachers received job embedded professional development on a monthly basis and did a book study on *Teach Like a Champion*.

Summary

The use of the growth model for the results of the 2011 AIMS test showed that there had been significant improvement in language arts but only slight improvement in math. As a result the school retained the language arts teachers but replaced the least effective math teacher. The intent in the hiring process was to locate and employ a math teacher who had experience with the grade level and could engage students in meaningful learning.

Below is a graph that represents the AIMS data from the year in all three measured categories based on the Achievement Profile for this period.



DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCESS USED FOR CONDUCTING AN ANALYSIS OF RELEVANT PUPIL ACHIEVEMENT DATA.

Efforts in the Previous Five Years

During the last five years, the school used the AIMS data primarily as the benchmark to determine student success. The data was reviewed by the administration and was shared with the staff. In both math and language arts, teachers were required to give students a pre and post test at the beginning and end of each semester. These tests were generated based on Arizona Academic Standards. This data was used to provide teachers with a starting point for instructional decisions and as part of the evaluation of teacher effectiveness at the end of each semester.

Between 2004 and 2008, all 10th graders were required to take the PSAT. This data was collected and shared with the staff in order to drive instruction. The school used the NWEA assessment system for incoming students as a placement assessment and for all students as a benchmark assessment at the end of each semester until 2010. While both programs provided some additional data for staff, the school determined that these programs did not answer the need for more benchmarking data. The reduction of funding also caused the school to review other options to gather data in a more timely manner.

Beginning with the 2008-2009 school year and the change in administration, there was a reduction in the focus on measurable data. The results of the AIMS scores for the Spring test of 2008 demonstrated to the site administrator that the school was on the right track and that additional assessments were not needed at that time. This proved a false premise.

The school spent the school years from the fall of 2008 until the spring of 2011 relying primarily on teacher and text publisher generated assessments. The school did continue to do a careful analysis of the AIMS data with a data team that included the site administrator and did continue to share this information with the instructional staff.

During the school year there were no benchmark assessments that were regularly given and there were no data discussions on a regular, on-going basis.

Following the Spring AIMS test of 2010 the data was carefully reviewed and analyzed by a data team that now included the district administration. An analysis of the data resulted in the conclusion that the teachers needed additional support in instructional skills and needed to be more carefully monitored in the implementation of the curriculum. The district administration began reviewing both additional programs to support the teachers and assessment systems that would provide formative assessments, summative assessments and contain a predictive feature. This system would be administered

throughout the year and would provide teachers with additional data upon which to base instructional decisions.

The school began the application process to become an International Baccalaureate school beginning with the 2011-12 school year. The district administration also adopted the CTB McGraw Hill Acuity program as an assessment program for that same year.

During the previous 5 years, the school has used a data review team during the summer to analyze the AIMS data and to make recommendations to both the administrative team and to the teachers for instructional purposes.

The remainder of the data analysis that occurred was done by the site administrator in one-on-one conferences with instructional staff.

Types of Data Analyzed

In each of the previous 5 years, the school did a careful analysis of the Spring AIMS data employing a data team that included the site administrator and classroom teachers. This data was then shared each year with the instructional staff.

The school has also collected the data from the NWEA program, which was administered to all incoming students from 2006-2009. This assessment was also given to all students at the end of the first semester to evaluate progress towards mastery of the Arizona Academic Standards.

During the last 5 years, the school also collected data from all sophomores who were required to take the PSAT. This data was used to compare students to a national cross section to determine whether or not the students were on track to be ready for college. This data was also shared with teachers. This assessment stopped being used in 2010.

Teachers were required to create and administer a pre and post test each semester based on the Arizona Academic Standards. This information was collected by the teachers and shared with the site level administrator. This data was used by the teachers to make instructional decisions.

How the Selected Data is Relevant to Student Improvement

The analysis of the AIMS data, which was the primary source of benchmark data throughout the previous 5 years, was necessary and relevant in order to determine whether there were gaps in the curriculum or in the instructional practices of the teachers. This data was analyzed on a student by student basis and by performance objective as well. This in-depth analysis was provided to teachers at the beginning of the school year.

The NWEA program was relevant in giving the school an accurate picture of the skill level of incoming students. This allowed the instructional staff to begin remediation much

earlier in the year when necessary and to differentiate for students within the first weeks of school. The assessment was also relevant in holding the instructional staff accountable for meeting the expectations set out by the school when the assessment was administered to all students at the end of the first semester. This also allowed for an additional data point for teachers in determining the level of mastery for all students at the end of the first semester and provided them with important information in making instructional decisions for the second semester of each year.

The PSAT, while not directly aligned to the Arizona Academic Standards, provided the school with information about college readiness of the 10th grade students when compared to a national sampling. This assessment also helped the teachers determine whether the level of rigor being presented to the students was adequate.

The most often used data came from the assessments, including the pre and post tests, created by the teachers or the textbook publishers. This data most directly reflected the classroom instruction. Direct alignment to instruction makes this data relevant because it allowed the classroom teacher to determine mastery of the material presented to the students. These assessments were aligned to the State Standards and were monitored by the site level administrator.

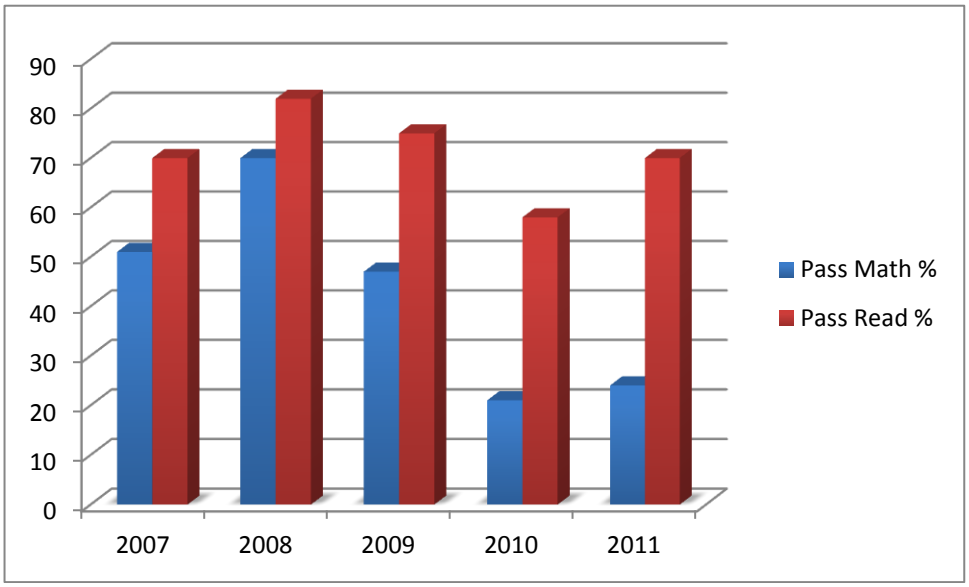
The school was also collecting data on a changing population. There was a significant shift in population beginning in the summer of 2008. This was a result of a number of factors but resulted in a changed population. The school identified the change and provided some professional development to assist teachers in dealing with this change.

Interpretation of Data, Trends, Strengths and Weaknesses

The school became very concerned with the data trends in during the 2008-2009 school year. The school had scored very well on the AIMS test in the Spring of 2008. This had been reflected in the other data collected that year. However partially because of the success in the Spring in 2008, there was very little emphasis on data analysis beyond the annual AIMS review that had been done each summer.

The site level administrative team completely changed during the summer of 2008. The new site level administrator spent the first year determining how things were done. This did not include extensive data review. There was also a change in some key instructional staff. The lack of data analysis allowed ineffective teaching to occur throughout the year. As a result, the AIMS data reflected a significant drop in scores especially in math.

Below is a graph that represents the trend in AIMS scores over the last 5 years based on AYP determinations. These figures vary slightly from those used to determine the Legacy Label from the state. The school has used the Legacy numbers in the past for two reasons. The first was that they provided both a “passing” and a “FFB” percentage. Secondly, the state label included writing scores, which are not included in the AYP determination or in the growth model at this time.



The school noted the drop in the number of students passing the AIMS but was equally concerned about the increase in the number of students who were in the "Falls Far Below" category.

The site administration did an analysis of the AIMS data and determined that there had been several ineffective instructors and that there were gaps in the curriculum. The school had replaced the math core text the previous year and the administration felt that there needed to be a revision of the curriculum to address the drop in scores.

At this time, the NWEA had been discontinued. The result was that it was taking teachers longer to identify students in need of remediation. In addition, teachers did not have accurate data about incoming student skill level. This presented a challenge to both the teachers and the students to identify the correct level of differentiation necessary. The discontinuation of the use of the assessment at the end of the semester also eliminated the monitoring for both the administration and teachers. For the administration, it meant the loss of data on teacher effectiveness. For the teachers, it meant they no longer had data to gauge a student's progress on a benchmark assessment.

The information gathered from the PSAT was useful; but since it did not directly align with the State Standards, was not always used by either the administration or the instructional staff. While all data is useful for instructional purposes, this data was not often used to make instructional decisions.

A review of the pre and post tests that teachers used indicated a wide range of rigor and content within the instructional staff. This data, because it was the most collected, was the most familiar to the teachers. However, there was such a variety of assessments, this data was not particularly useful in making school wide decisions. This data would not, for

example, help identify gaps in the curriculum, nor was it particularly effective in identifying weaknesses in instruction.

The demographic data that was collected indicated an increase in the number of students who qualified for free and reduced lunch as well as a slight increase in both SPED and ELL populations. An analysis of the data indicated that the school recognized this shift, which paralleled the community as a whole, and provided some professional development to help teachers address the needs of this new population. However, there was not sufficient follow up or monitoring on the part of the site administration.

A careful review of the data indicates that in the 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 school years there was an effective differentiation of instruction for students based on the data that the teachers were collecting. The AIMS data shows a significant growth from the Spring 2007 test to the Spring 2008 test in both reading and math. During this time period the use of the NWEA and AIMS data along with the teacher generated pre and post tests and the formative and summative assessments, created information that the teachers were able to use effectively to alter instruction and meet student needs. The use of the NWEA program also allowed for the correct placement of new students to provide them the most effective education possible.

Beginning with the 2008-2009 school year, the data collected remained basically the same. The significant difference was the end of the NWEA program. The lack of a benchmark program resulted in more difficulty on the part of the administration in identifying ineffective instruction or gaps in the curriculum. From the Spring 2008 AIMS assessment to the Spring 2009 AIMS assessment, there was a significant drop in math scores. This is also the year in which the state average scores fell as a result of the change in the math standards. However, the school score drop exceeded the drop across the state. There was also a drop in the language arts scores although this drop was much less. As was noted previously, the data was analyzed by a data team and the information was shared with teachers.

As the school reviewed the data and the practices from this period, it became obvious that one of the significant changes that did occur at this time was a general decrease in the level of accountability for the teachers. The lesson plans were still collected and reviewed, and the teacher generated assessments were also collected and reviewed but there was no structured, continuous review of student level data with the teachers. The school did not have an ongoing program to have teachers analyze data, nor were the teachers held accountable for scores prior to the administration of the AIMS assessments.

If a teacher was ineffective based on AIMS results, the teacher was not retained, but that information was available too late to make significant differences.

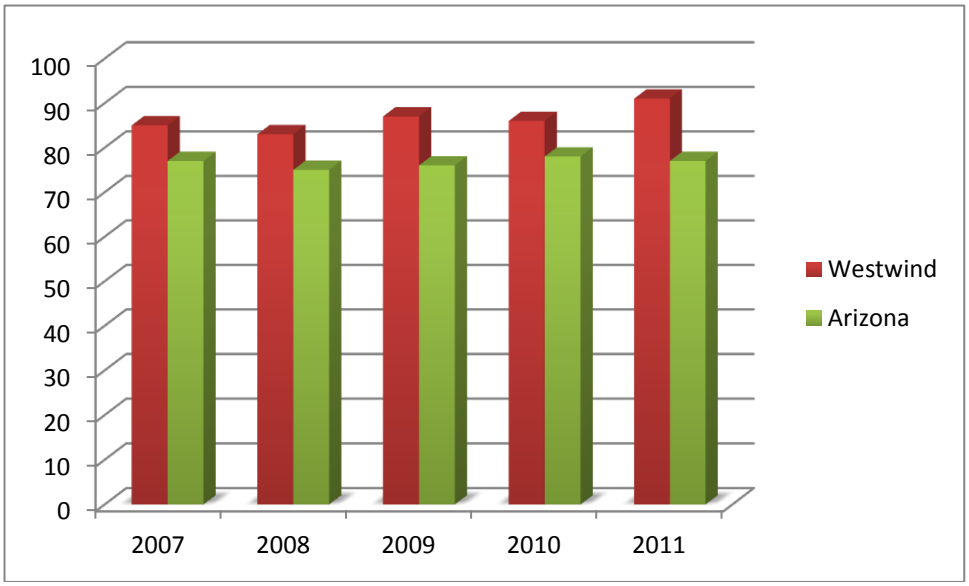
The data that was available indicated that there were gaps in the curriculum that needed to be addressed. The site administrator determined who would be best qualified to revise the curriculum to address those gaps. It should be noted that there was a change in the

instructional staff during the year based on information available. A math teacher was replaced near the end of the first semester.

The AIMS data from the 2010 Spring test showed a continued decline in student scores. The revisions to the curriculum, especially in math, had not made a significant difference. The math scores dropped from a passing rate of 47% in 2009 to 20% in 2010. The language arts scores demonstrated a similar drop going from 74% passing to 57% passing.

Because the primary data that the school was using to measure student progress indicated that the school had dropped for two consecutive years, the district administration stepped in and did a careful review of the practices and procedures at the school. The district administration determined that the general curriculum needed to be strengthened and began the International Baccalaureate application process. The district administration also determined that there was not enough valid data being collected to allow teachers to make appropriate instructional decisions. The district then began investigating possible additional benchmark assessment programs available to the school that would provide the necessary data. It should also be noted that during this period the school was able to maintain a graduation rate that exceeded the state average each year, even as the school was struggling with some introductory course work at the 10th grade level.

Below is a chart of the graduation levels during the previous 5 years.

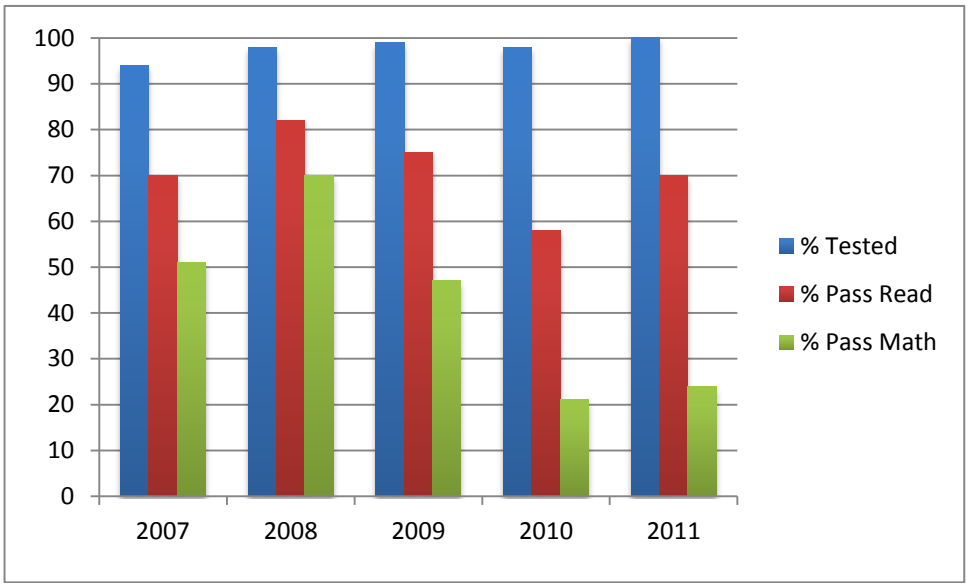


The school continued to collect the pre and post tests created by the teachers. The site administration also monitored classroom grades and required teachers to meet with students who were failing or in danger of failing. These meetings were required outside the normal instructional periods and teachers were required to plan for these tutoring sessions just as they would for class periods. This had been required of teachers previously but was not monitored closely to make sure implementation was universal.

The district administration also required that the site administration monitor the implementation of several language arts programs that had been in place but were not being implemented fully. These included the reading and writing prompts daily by all teachers with the review by the site administrator, as well as the Cornell note taking system as a graphic organizer for all students in all classes. Staff members were replaced; and a concerted effort was made to bring in experienced staff, especially in math.

The result of these efforts had mixed results. In language arts there was a significant improvement in both student growth and percent passing the AIMS assessment but in math there was only slight improvements in each category. The district administration determined that additional steps would need to be taken.

The following chart is the percentage of students taking and passing the AIMS test in Reading and Math as determined by the AYP calculations for years 2008-2011. The data for year 2007 is based on the Achievement Profile data and a conservative estimate of the percentage of students tested for that year only.

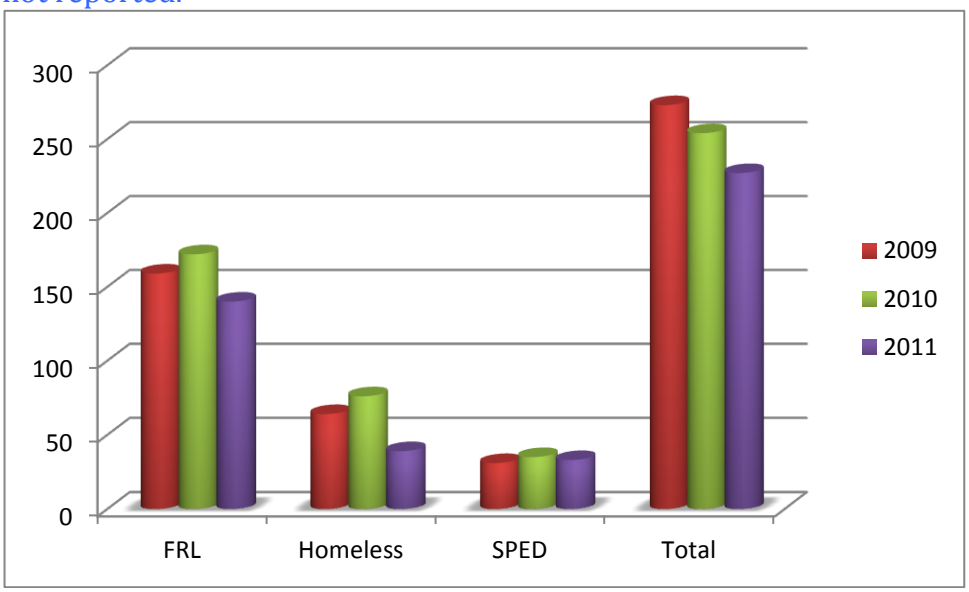


"What We Learned and What We Are Going to Do About It"

Historically the school relied on the labels from the Department of Education and a review of the AIMS data during the summer to determine the success or failure of the program. Beginning with the test results in 2009, it became apparent that the level of student achievement was not being maintained. The district level administration began a review of the practices currently in place and determined that the level of accountability and oversight was less than had been true under the previous administration.

It was also apparent that there had been a change in the general student population. Although there had been some training provided to teachers to help them address the change in the student body, this training had not produced the desired effect.

Following is a chart that indicates the population for Westwind Academy for the last three years. Prior to these years the number of Free or Reduced Lunch (FRL) and homeless was not reported.



The steps taken during the 2009-2010 school year proved to be inadequate to address the needs of the students. It was also determined that in certain critical areas, specifically math, the instructional staff was not academically strong enough to address the needs of the students or to move them quickly enough from the deficits with which they arrived.

The school looked at a number of other possible causes. The math curriculum was revised to better support the current student population and additional professional development was provided along with weekly review of student progress for those students who were failing classes.

The primary source of data generated during the school year continued to be teacher created assessments and the AIMS data at the end of the school year.

It became apparent that there had been a "creep" away from those practices that had been effective in the past and that the level of accountability for the instructional staff was also less rigorous.

For the 2010-2011 school year, staff was replaced and the district level administration mandated the reimplementation of several practices that had appeared to be successful in the past. This resulted in a significant level of student growth in the area of language arts but only a small improvement in student growth for math.

During this year, it became apparent that relying on teacher generated assessments was not providing the data necessary to give teachers the information needed to make the correct instructional decisions. It was also determined that while the curriculum was adequate, the level of classroom instruction needed to be reviewed and the level of teacher accountability needed to increase.

As a result of these decisions, the district administration undertook a search for an assessment tool that would provide the school and teachers with a predictive evaluation as well as benchmark assessments throughout the year for instructional decisions. It was determined that the school would implement the Acuity program for the 2011-2012 school year and that all teachers would be trained. The math and language arts teachers would be required to use this assessment tool throughout the year. The district administration recognized that the implementation of this program would need to be an on-going one and that teachers would need not only training in the effective use of the tool but also in using the data that was generated from its use.

Since the implementation of the Acuity assessment system would take a year to reach its full effectiveness, the District administration also began looking at other areas of concern.

It was apparent that a portion of the success that Westwind Prep had experienced in the 2006-2008 school years was a direct result of some exceptional teachers and that when provided with specific guidance and support, other teachers were able to make significant gains, as was apparent in the area of language arts. It was determined that more support and oversight needed to occur in the area of instruction and through instructional leadership.

With that in mind, the District administration began to restructure the site level administration with the intent of moving the responsibility of instructional leadership to another position. It was also decided to reassign the site level administrator to other duties. The District Administration then began a search for candidates who had the appropriate level of background and experience in both instructional leadership and school improvement to undertake the turnaround of the school. The goal was to find an individual who had extensive experience in working with instructional staff and could quickly identify instructional or curricular needs, who could provide the support and professional development to make the instructional changes that needed to be made and who could support teachers in evaluating student data. A candidate was selected and the transition of curriculum and instructional supervision from the site administrator to this position occurred in October of 2011.

The Director has been given full authority to work with both teachers and administrators to make the necessary changes required to improve student academic growth and performance. At this time, the director has reviewed the school's curriculum as well as the timeline for instruction within the curriculum, and made appropriate adjustments. Concurrently, the director began observing all the teachers to ensure that the State

Standards were the focus of instruction and that the instruction and assessments were at the appropriate level of difficulty.

The school has implemented a number of best practices with the instructional staff. The teachers have received training in the use of the Acuity assessment system, have given benchmark assessments and have reviewed the data to make instructional decisions.

Summary

During the review of the school data for the last 5 years, it became apparent that the school has reviewed and aligned the curriculum to the State Standards. The school also recognized that this review and revision process would need to be ongoing to address the 2010 Arizona Academic Standards, as well as the changing needs of the student population. As the school moves forward with its plans to more fully implement the International Baccalaureate model, additional revisions will be necessary. This review and revision process will continue on an annual basis. The school believes that the curriculum is well aligned to the State Standards.

The school believes that there are several areas that contributed to the drop in student achievement scores. The first was a lack of timely data available to both the administrative team and the instructional staff. Although the school did a careful job of analysis of the AIMS data, this information came too late to make meaningful teaching decisions for the students at the time. Further, this information was presented to the teachers, but there was not enough follow up or monitoring to ensure that the information and the changes that the information suggested, were implemented. It appears that the instruction presented to the students for several years in a row did not change in the face of the declining scores. The school identified the need for an assessment program that would provide benchmark scores throughout the course of the year, as well as being able to be used for formative and summative assessments. In addition, the school recognizes that this data needs to be used more effectively by both the instructional staff and the administrative team. Further, this information needs to be more transparent and become a part of the daily life of all Westwind Prep stakeholders.

In order to address this situation the school began using the Acuity Assessment Program in August of 2011. The staff began training and did administer a pre-test to all students. The site administrator at the time did not feel that the testing system was adequate and did not follow up with the staff for further benchmark testing. When the Director of Curriculum and Instruction was brought in, additional training was provided for the staff and the system was again put into use. The first data set for language arts and math was done at the end of the first semester. This information was used by teachers to plan for the second semester. A benchmark calendar was established in the second semester with assessments established for the last week in January, the last week in March and the third week in May. The calendar will continue with the new school year with 5 benchmark assessments during the course of the year. The assessments will also be used with incoming students to

determine current needs prior to students starting with the school to better place students and provide remediation where necessary.

During the last five years, the school has implemented several best practices, which were not as supported by the site administrator as needed to be for full implementation. The school has addressed this issue in two ways. The first was to bring in a Director of Curriculum and Instruction to oversee and support classroom instruction and to provide the teachers with the support to implement best practices. The second was to replace the site administrator.

The school recognized that during the past 5 years the success of the students and the school has been subject to the abilities of the staff that was present. The school recognizes that great schools have great teachers, but it also realizes that great teachers can be "home grown." The school has modified its professional development program to focus on improving the instructional ability of the current staff and to put into place those systems that will allow the school to sustain a successful teaching cadre through the attrition that is common to all schools and to charter schools in particular. Not only has the school modified its professional development program, but it has also increased the monitoring of the instructional staff to insure that best practices are implemented by all teachers and that teachers who are not able to meet the expectations of the school are identified early and given the additional support or replaced as necessary.

Once the Director of Curriculum and Instruction was in place the staff received specific training on using the State Academic Standards effectively and in focusing instruction and assessment appropriately with those standards. The staff was required to create assessments prior to the beginning of instruction and submit those assessments to the Director for review along with a listing of the performance objectives or standards being addressed during the unit of instruction. In addition, as part of the weekly lesson plans that all instructional staff must submit for review by the Director, each teacher needs to create daily learning objectives that reflect the rigor necessary to effectively meet the State Academic Standards.

The school requires that teachers prepare both formative and summative assessments from the State Standards on a biweekly calendar. Those assessments are submitted to the administration at the beginning of the instructional period to assure that the assessments align with State Standards and are at the appropriate level of rigor. Teachers also submit daily objectives and weekly lesson plans to the administration for review.

Teachers are informally observed on a weekly basis. The school has provided the teachers with specific expectations based on best practices for all teachers. Teachers will be formally observed at least twice each semester, once by the Director of Curriculum and Instruction and once by the site administrator.

Since the school is now able to collect benchmark data, the Director of Curriculum and Instruction meets with teachers once every two weeks to review data and determine instructional strategies. The school will establish a data wall that will contain data for both

language arts and math for all students. This information will be maintained by the teachers and will be reviewed by the administration. This information will become part of the data discussions that occur during the biweekly meetings between the instructional staff and the administration.

- **Need-**The school has identified a need for additional assessment data.
- **Solution-**The school has purchased CTB McGraw Hill Acuity program. Staff has been trained in the use of this assessment program and has begun using it.
- **Need-**The school identified the need for more effective use of data for instructional decisions
- **Solution-**Implementation of data discussions and instructional strategies between the staff and administration on a biweekly basis
- **Need-**The school identified the need to make a change in the administrative staff at the school and to address the instructional needs of the teachers.
- **Solution-**The school has replaced the site level administrator and has brought in a Director of Curriculum and Instruction.
- **Need-**Additional support for instructional staff in best practices of instruction
- **Solution-**Redesign of professional development program to be more focused and the addition of the Director of Curriculum and Instruction to provide the support and to monitor the implementation of best practices for the instructional staff.
- **Need-**The school identified the need to prepare the staff to effective use the new Arizona Academic Standards (Common Core).
- **Solution-**The Director of Curriculum and Instruction has been accepted into "Train the Trainer" workshop presented by the Arizona Department of Education and will participate in that training in February of 2012.
- **Need-**The school identified the need for teachers to be able to review Standards that had been taught throughout the year and for the administration to be able to identify the scaffolding of instruction that was occurring within a classroom.
- **Solution-**The creation of Standards Checklists to be maintained by teachers and reviewed by the administration. When used in conjunction with lesson plans, biweekly and monthly assessments, this will provide a comprehensive picture of the instruction within a class. These checklists will be revised to reflect the new Arizona Academic Standards during the summer of 2012. The instructional staff will receive appropriate training in the new standards during that time as well.